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DE RUEHIL #2468 1551346

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9562

INFO RUEHAD/AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI PRIORITY 3422

RUEHAB/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 2507

RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA PRIORITY 0174

RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 4220

RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 1327

RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2094

RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 1423

RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY

RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7156

RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 8378

RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY 1497

RUEHMK/AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY 0769

RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT PRIORITY 0331

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1062

RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 5671

RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 3239

RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI PRIORITY 1575

RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 2663

RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 6234

RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 2505

RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 0860

RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2419

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHWSMRC/USCINCCENT MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ISLAMABAD 002468

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: IMAM OF THE KAABA CONDEMS THE RED MOSQUE'S LEADERSHIP

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 2334

[1](#)B. ISLAMABAD 2270

[1](#)C. ISLAMABAD 1846

[1](#)D. ISLAMABAD 1688

[1](#)E. ISLAMABAD 1647

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Peter W. Bodde, reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

[11.](#) (C) Background: Reftels describe the situation at Islamabad's Red Mosque, where two imams have for several months been encouraging male and female madrassah students to engage in vigilante justice. The situation at the women's madrassah, which is located in the heart of Islamabad and is home to between 2,000 and 3,000 girls and women, has gained particularly profuse media attention. Reftels are being retransmitted to addressees not previously on distribution. End Background.

[12.](#) (C) On June 2, the Imam of the Kaaba Shaikh Abdur Rehman al-Sudais publicly appealed to the Red Mosque administration to cease illegal tactics. The remarks were made in Islamabad during the Imam's six-day tour of Pakistan. (Note: The Imam is the prayer leader at the holiest site in Islam, the Kaaba. End Note.)

[12.](#) (C) The Imam stressed that Islam does not allow mosques to be used for grandstanding. He characterized the Red Mosque's activities as leading to chaos and anarchy. The Imam stressed that the Red Mosque leadership should peacefully resolve grievances with the government, with city officials, and with religious scholars. He also condemned the Red Mosque brigade for using women and children in its actions.

¶3. (C) Both in his public statements and his well-attended Friday khutba (sermon) at Islamabad's huge Faisal Mosque, Shaikh al-Sudais called on the Muslim world to unite in eschewing extremism, sectarianism, and violence. He emphasized the Islamic principles of brotherhood, compassion, and consideration for others.

¶4. (C) In response, the Red Mosque leadership invited the Imam to visit their mosque and see their "realities". They claimed the government had misled him about their activities. Red Mosque leader Maulana Abdul Aziz also declared that the Imam was Amir-ul-Mumineen (leader of the faithful) and should replace President Musharraf. Shaikh al-Sudais did not visit the Red Mosque or meet with its leaders.

¶5. (C) Comment: President Musharraf and his advisors have a long-term strategy of turning public opinion against the Red Mosque's leaders and thus putting pressure on the Mosque to reform. The Imam-e-Kaaba's comments about the mosque appear to be part of Musharraf's plan to pressure the mosque to reform. Indeed, we note that Pakistan Muslim League President Chaudhray Hussain Shujaat, the architect of the Red Mosque strategy, served as the Imam's host for much of the visit. End Comment

BODDE